

TO SAVE THE JEWISH HOMELAND

There Is Still Time

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WHEN, on November 29, 1947, the partition of Palestine and the establishment of a Jewish state were accepted by the United Nations, it was assumed that no outside force would be necessary to implement this decision.

It took the Arabs less than two months to destroy this illusion and it took the United States less than three months to reverse its stand on partition, withdraw its support in the United Nations, and propose a trusteeship for Palestine. Of all the member states

LESS than six months after the Assembly's recommendation looking to the declaration of a Jewish state in Palestine on May 15, the Jewish homeland stands at the brink of large-scale war, with the leadership of the Yishuv pledged to the perspective of an armed struggle to the death, at the cost of every man and every settlement, if need be. Is there no other alternative? In this article, latest in a series which has discussed the problems and prospects of the Jewish state from diverse points of view, HANNAH ARENDT, Zionist of many years standing, reviews the steps that have brought the Jewish homeland to its present plight and tries to trace out a path that to her mind can save the great human assets and achievements of the Yishuv. Dr. Arendt's writings on politics and history have won her an increasing American audience. Readers of COMMENTARY may remember in particular her article "The Jewish State: Fifty Years After" (May 1946), a searching and prophetic analysis of the ideas of Theodore Herzl. Dr. Arendt studied philosophy at Heidelberg under Karl Jaspers, wrote for German magazines before her emigration to France in 1933, and came to the United States in 1941. In 1935, as executive secretary of Youth Aliya, she brought a party of children from France to settle in Palestine, and she has an intimate knowledge of the country. She is at present completing a volume on imperialism, which Houghton, Mifflin will bring out next year.

of the United Nations, only Soviet Russia and her satellites made it unequivocally clear that they still favored partition and the immediate proclamation of a Jewish state.

Trusteeship was at once rejected by both the Jewish Agency and the Arab Higher Committee. The Jews claimed the moral right to adhere to the original United Nations decision; the Arabs claimed an equally moral right to adhere to the League of Nations principle of self-determination, according to which Palestine would be ruled by its present Arab majority and the Jews be granted minority rights. The Jewish Agency, on its part, announced the proclamation of a Jewish state for May 16, regardless of any United Nations decision. It remains a fact, meanwhile, that trusteeship, like partition, would have to be enforced by an outside power.

A last-minute appeal for a truce, made to both parties under the auspices of the United States, broke down in two days. Upon this appeal had rested the last chance of avoiding foreign intervention, at least temporarily. As matters stand at this moment, not a single possible solution or proposition affecting the Palestinian conflict is in sight that could be realized without enforcement by external authority.

The past few weeks of guerrilla warfare should have shown both Arabs and Jews how costly and destructive the war upon which they have embarked promises to be. In recent days, the Jews have won a few initial successes that prove their relative superiority over present Arab forces in Palestine. The Arabs, however, instead of concluding at least local truce agreements, have decided to evacuate whole cities and towns rather than stay in Jewish-dominated territory. This be-

havior declares more effectively than all proclamations the Arab refusal of any compromise; it is obvious that they have decided to expend in time and numbers whatever it may take to win a decisive victory. The Jews, on the other hand, living on a small island in an Arab sea, might well be expected to jump at the chance to exploit their present advantage by offering a negotiated peace. Their military situation is such that time and numbers necessarily work against them. If one takes into account the objective vital interests of the Arab and the Jewish peoples, especially in terms of the present situation and future well-being of the Near East—where a full-fledged war will inevitably invite all kinds of international interventions—the present desire of both peoples to fight it out at any price is nothing less than sheer irrationality.

ONE of the reasons for this unnatural and, as far as the Jewish people are concerned, tragic development is a decisive change in Jewish public opinion that has accompanied the confusing political decisions of the great powers.

The fact is that Zionism has won its most significant victory among the Jewish people at the very moment when its achievements in Palestine are in gravest danger. This may not seem extraordinary to those who have always believed that the building of a Jewish homeland was the most important—perhaps the only real—achievement of Jews in our century, and that ultimately no individual who wanted to stay a Jew could remain aloof from events in Palestine. Nevertheless, Zionism had in actuality always been a partisan and controversial issue; the Jewish Agency, though claiming to speak for the Jewish people as a whole, was still well aware that it represented only a fraction of them. This situation has changed overnight. With the exception of a few anti-Zionist diehards, whom nobody can take very seriously, there is now no organization and almost no individual Jew that doesn't privately or publicly support partition and the establishment of a Jewish state.

Jewish left-wing intellectuals who a relatively short time ago still looked down upon Zionism as an ideology for the feeble-minded, and viewed the building of a Jewish homeland as a hopeless enterprise that they, in their great wisdom, had rejected before it was ever started; Jewish businessmen whose interest in Jewish politics had always been determined by the all-important question of how to keep Jews out of newspaper headlines; Jewish philanthropists who had resented Palestine as a terribly expensive charity, draining off funds from other "more worthy" purposes; the readers of the Yiddish press, who for decades had been sincerely, if naively, convinced that America was the promised land—all these, from the Bronx to Park Avenue down to Greenwich Village and over to Brooklyn are united today in the firm conviction that a Jewish state is needed, that America has betrayed the Jewish people, that the reign of terror by the Irgun and the Stern groups is more or less justified, and that Rabbi Silver, David Ben Gurion, and Moshe Shertok are the real, if somewhat too moderate, statesmen of the Jewish people.

Something very similar to this growing unanimity among American Jews has arisen in Palestine itself. Just as Zionism had been a partisan issue among American Jews, so the Arab question and the state issue had been controversial issues within the Zionist movement and in Palestine. Political opinion was sharply divided there between the chauvinism of the Revisionists, the middle-of-the-road nationalism of the majority party, and the vehemently anti-nationalist, anti-state sentiments of a large part of the kibbutz movement, particularly the Hashomer Hatzair. Very little is now left of these differences of opinion.

The Hashomer Hatzair has formed one party with the Ahdut Avodah, sacrificing its age-old bi-national program to the "accomplished fact" of the United Nations decision—a body, by the way, for which they never had too much respect when it was still called the League of Nations. The small Aliya Hadasha, mostly composed of recent immigrants from Central Europe, still retains

some of its old moderation and its sympathies for England, and it would certainly prefer Weizmann to Ben Gurion—but since Weizmann and most of its members have always been committed to partition, and, like everybody else, to the Biltmore Program, this opposition does not amount to much more than a difference over personalities.

The general mood of the country, moreover, has been such that terrorism and the growth of totalitarian methods are silently tolerated and secretly applauded; and the general, underlying public opinion with which anybody desiring to appeal to the Yishuv has to reckon shows no notable divisions at all.

Even more surprising than the growing unanimity of opinion among Palestinian Jews on one hand and American Jews on the other, is the fact that they are essentially in agreement on the following more or less roughly stated propositions: the moment has now come to get everything or nothing, victory or death; Arab and Jewish claims are irreconcilable and only a military decision can settle the issue; the Arabs, all Arabs, are our enemies and we accept this fact; only outmoded liberals believe in compromises, only philistines believe in justice, and only *shlemiels* prefer truth and negotiation to propaganda and machine guns; Jewish experience in the last decades—or over the last centuries, or over the last two thousand years—has finally awakened us and taught us to look out for ourselves; this alone is reality, everything else is stupid sentimentality; everybody is against us, Great Britain is anti-Semitic, the United States is imperialist—but Russia might be our ally for a certain period because her interests happen to coincide with ours; yet in the final analysis we count upon nobody except ourselves; in sum—we are ready to go down fighting, and we will consider anybody who stands in our way a traitor and anything done to hinder us a stab in the back.

IT WOULD be frivolous to deny the intimate connection between this mood on the part of Jews everywhere and the recent

European catastrophe, with the subsequent fantastic injustice and callousness toward the surviving remnant that were thereby so ruthlessly transformed into displaced persons. The result has been an amazing and rapid change in what we call national character. After two thousand years of "Galut mentality," the Jewish people have suddenly ceased to believe in survival as an ultimate good in itself and have gone over in a few years to the opposite extreme. Now Jews believe in fighting at any price and feel that "going down" is a sensible method of politics.

Unanimity of opinion is a very ominous phenomenon, and one characteristic of our modern mass age. It destroys social and personal life, which is based on the fact that we are different by nature and by conviction. To hold different opinions and to be aware that other people think differently on the same issue shields us from that god-like certainty which stops all discussion and reduces social relationships to those of an ant heap. A unanimous public opinion tends to eliminate bodily those who differ, for mass unanimity is not the result of agreement, but an expression of fanaticism and hysteria. In contrast to agreement, unanimity does not stop at certain well-defined objects, but spreads like an infection into every related issue.

THUS Jewish unanimity on the Palestine issue has already prompted a somewhat vague and inarticulate shift of Jewish public opinion in the direction of pro-Soviet sympathies, a shift that even affects people who for more than twenty-five years have consistently denounced Bolshevik policies. Even more significant than such changes of mood and general attitude have been the attempts to establish an anti-Western and pro-Soviet orientation inside the Zionist movement. The resignation of Moshe Sneh, the organizer of illegal immigration and formerly prominent in the Haganah, is important in this respect; and occasional utterances by almost every one of the Palestinian delegates in America point even more strongly in this

direction. The program, finally, of the new left-wing Palestinian party formed by the merger of the Hashomer Hatzair and the Ahdut Avodah has put plainly on record as its chief reason for not joining the majority party the desire to have Zionist foreign policy rely on Russia more than on the Western democracies.

The mentality behind this unrealistic understanding of Russian policy and the consequences of subjecting oneself to it has a long tradition in Zionism. As is understandable enough among people without political experience, a childlike hope has always been present that some big brother would come along to befriend the Jewish people, solve their problems, protect them from the Arabs, and present them eventually with a beautiful Jewish state with all the trimmings. This role was filled in Jewish imagination by Great Britain—until the issuance of the White Paper; and because of this naive trust, and an equally naive underestimation of Arab forces, for decades Jewish leaders let slip one opportunity after another to come to an understanding with the Arabs. After the outbreak of the Second World War, and particularly since the Biltmore Program, the imaginary role of the big brother of the Jews fell to the United States. But it has very quickly become clear that America is no more in a position to fill the bill than the British, and so Soviet Russia is now left as the only power upon which foolish hopes can be pinned. It is remarkable, however, that Russia is the first big brother whom even Jews do not quite trust. For the first time a note of cynicism has entered Jewish hopes.

Unfortunately, this healthy distrust is not caused so much by a specific suspicion of Soviet policy as by another traditionally Zionist feeling that has by now seized all sections of the Jewish people: the cynical and deep-rooted conviction that all Gentiles are anti-Semitic, and everybody and everything is against the Jews, that, in the words of Herzl, the world can be divided into *verschämte und unverschämte Antisemiten*, and that the "essential meaning of Zionism is the revolt of the Jews against their point-

less and hapless mission—which has been to challenge the Gentiles to be crueller than they dare without forcing them to be as kind as they ought, [with the result that the Zionist revolt has ended in reproducing] in altered perspective the dynamic picture of Israel's mission" (Benjamin Halpern in the *New Leader*, December 1947). In other words, general Gentile hostility, a phenomenon that Herzl thought was directed only at Galut Jewry, and which would therefore disappear with the normalization of the Jewish people in Palestine, is now assumed by Zionists to be an unalterable, eternal fact of Jewish history that repeats itself under any circumstances, even in Palestine.

Obviously this attitude is plain racist chauvinism and it is equally obvious that this division between Jews and all other peoples—who are to be classed as enemies—does not differ from other master race theories (even though the Jewish "master race" is pledged not to conquest but to suicide by its protagonists). It is also plain that any interpretation of politics oriented according to such "principles" is hopelessly out of touch with the realities of this world. Nevertheless it is a fact that such attitudes tacitly or explicitly permeate the general atmosphere of Jewry; and therefore Jewish leaders can threaten mass suicide to the applause of their audiences, and the terrible and irresponsible "or else we shall go down" creeps into all official Jewish statements, however radical or moderate their sources.

EVERY believer in a democratic government knows the importance of a loyal opposition. The tragedy of Jewish politics at this moment is that it is wholly determined by the Jewish Agency and that no opposition to it of any significance exists either in Palestine or America.

From the time of the Balfour Declaration the loyal opposition in Zionist politics was constituted by the non-Zionists (certainly this was the case after 1929, when the enlarged Jewish Agency elected half of the Executive from the non-Zionists). But for all practical purposes the non-Zionist oppo-

sition no longer exists today. This unfortunate development was encouraged, if not caused, by the fact that the United States and the United Nations finally endorsed an extremist Jewish demand that non-Zionists had always held to be totally unrealistic. With the support of a Jewish state by the great powers, the non-Zionists believed themselves refuted by reality itself. Their sudden loss of significance, and their helplessness in the face of what they felt justified in thinking an accomplished fact, were the result of an attitude that has always identified reality with the sum of those facts created by the powers-that-be—and by them only. They had believed in the Balfour Declaration rather than in the wish of the Jewish people to build its homeland; they had reckoned with the British or American governments rather than with the people living in the Near East. They had refused to go along with the Biltmore program—but they accepted it once it was recognized by the United States and the United Nations.

Now, if the non-Zionists had wanted to act as genuine realists in Jewish politics, they should have insisted and continued to insist that the only permanent reality in the whole constellation was the presence of Arabs in Palestine, a reality no decision could alter—except, perhaps, the decision of a totalitarian state, implemented by its particular brand of ruthless force. Instead, they mistook decisions of great powers for the ultimate realities and lacked the courage to warn, not only their fellow-Jews, but also their respective governments of the possible consequences of partition and the declaration of a Jewish state. It was ominous enough that no significant Zionist party was left to oppose the decision of November 29, the majority being committed to the Jewish state, and the others (the minority under Weizmann) to partition; but it was downright tragic that at this most crucial of all moments the loyal opposition of the non-Zionists simply disappeared.

IN THE face of the “despair and resoluteness” of the Yishuv (as a Palestinian delegate recently put it) and the suicide

threats of the Jewish leaders, it might be useful to remind the Jews and the world what it is that will “go down” if the final tragedy should come in Palestine.

Palestine and the building of a Jewish homeland constitute today the great hope and the great pride of Jews all over the world. What would happen to Jews, individually and collectively, if this hope and this pride were to be extinguished in another catastrophe is almost beyond imagining. But it is certain that this would become the central fact of Jewish history and it is possible that it might become the beginning of the self-dissolution of the Jewish people. There is no Jew in the world whose whole outlook on life and the world would not be radically changed by such a tragedy.

If the Yishuv went down, it would drag along in its fall the collective settlements, the kibbutzim—which constitute perhaps the most promising of all social experiments made in the 20th century, as well as the most magnificent part of the Jewish homeland.

Here, in complete freedom and unhampered by any government, a new form of ownership, a new type of farmer, a new way of family life and child education, and new approaches to the troublesome conflicts between city and country, between rural and industrial labor have been created.

The people of the kibbutzim have been too absorbed in their quiet and effective revolution to make their voices sufficiently heard in Zionist politics. If it is true that the members of the Irgun and the Stern group are not recruited from the kibbutzim, it is also true that the kibbutzim have offered no serious obstacle to terrorism.

It is this very abstention from politics, this enthusiastic concentration on immediate problems, that has enabled the kibbutz pioneers to go ahead with their work, undisturbed by the more noxious ideologies of our times, realizing new laws and new behavior patterns, establishing new customs and new values, and translating and integrating them in new institutions. The loss of the kibbutzim, the ruin of the new type

of man they have produced, the destruction of their institutions and the oblivion that would swallow the fruit of their experiences—this would be one of the severest of blows to the hopes of all those, Jewish and non-Jewish, who have not and never will make their peace with present-day society and its standards. For this Jewish experiment in Palestine holds out hope of solutions that will be acceptable and applicable, not only in individual cases, but also for the large mass of men everywhere whose dignity and very humanity are in our time so seriously threatened by the pressures of modern life and its unsolved problems.

STILL another precedent, or at least its possibility, would go down with the Yishuv—that of close cooperation between two peoples, one embodying the most advanced ways of European civilization, the other an erstwhile victim of colonial oppression and backwardness. The idea of Arab-Jewish cooperation, though never realized on any scale and today seemingly farther off than ever, is not an idealistic day dream but a sober statement of the fact that without it the whole Jewish venture in Palestine is doomed. Jews and Arabs could be forced by circumstances to show the world that there are no differences between two people that cannot be bridged. Indeed, the working out of such a *modus vivendi* might in the end serve as a model of how to counteract the dangerous tendencies of formerly oppressed peoples to shut themselves off from the rest of the world and develop nationalist superiority complexes of their own.

Many opportunities for Jewish-Arab friendship have already been lost, but none of these failures can alter the basic fact that the existence of the Jews in Palestine depends on achieving it. Moreover, the Jews have one advantage in the fact that, excluded as they were from official history for centuries, they have no imperialist past to live down. They can still act as a vanguard in international relations on a small but valid scale—as in the kibbutzim they have already acted as a vanguard in social relations despite the relatively

insignificant numbers of the people involved.

THERE is very little doubt about the final outcome of an all-out war between Arabs and Jews. One can win many battles without winning a war. And up to now, no real battle has yet taken place in Palestine.

And even if the Jews were to win the war, its end would find the unique possibilities and the unique achievements of Zionism in Palestine destroyed. The land that would come into being would be something quite other than the dream of world Jewry, Zionist and non-Zionist. The "victorious" Jews would live surrounded by an entirely hostile Arab population, secluded inside ever-threatened borders, absorbed with physical self-defense to a degree that would submerge all other interests and activities. The growth of a Jewish culture would cease to be the concern of the whole people; social experiments would have to be discarded as impractical luxuries; political thought would center around military strategy; economic development would be determined exclusively by the needs of war. And all this would be the fate of a nation that—no matter how many immigrants it could still absorb and how far it extended its boundaries (the whole of Palestine and Transjordan is the insane Revisionist demand)—would still remain a very small people greatly outnumbered by hostile neighbors.

Under such circumstances (as Ernst Simon has pointed out) the Palestinian Jews would degenerate into one of those small warrior tribes about whose possibilities and importance history has amply informed us since the days of Sparta. Their relations with world Jewry would become problematical, since their defense interests might clash at any moment with those of other countries where large numbers of Jews lived. Palestine Jewry would eventually separate itself from the larger body of world Jewry and in its isolation develop into an entirely new people. Thus it becomes plain that at this moment and under present circumstances a Jewish state can only be erected at the price of the Jewish homeland.

FORTUNATELY, there are still some Jews left who have shown in these bitter days that they have too much wisdom and too great a sense of responsibility to follow blindly where desperate, fanaticized masses would lead them. There are still, despite all appearances, a few Arabs who are unhappy about the increasingly fascist coloration of their national movements.

Until very recently, moreover, Palestinian Arabs were relatively unconcerned in the conflict with the Jews and the actual fighting against them is even now left to so-called volunteers from neighboring countries. But now even this situation has begun to change. The evacuations of Haifa and Tiberias by their Arab populations are the most ominous occurrences of the whole Arab-Jewish war so far. These evacuations could not have been carried out without careful preparation and it is hardly likely that they are spontaneous. Nevertheless, it is very doubtful that Arab leadership, which by creating homelessness among Palestinian Arabs aims to arouse the Moslem world, would have succeeded in persuading tens of thousands of city dwellers to desert all their earthly possessions at a moment's notice, had not the massacre of Deir Yassin struck fear of the Jews into the Arab population. And another crime that played into the hands of the Arab leadership had been committed only a few months back in Haifa itself when the Irgun had thrown a bomb into a line of Arab workers outside the Haifa refinery, one of the few places where Jews and Arabs had for years worked side by side.

The political implications of these acts, neither of which had any military objective whatsoever, are all too clear in both instances: they were aimed at those places where neighborly relations between Arabs and Jews had not yet been completely destroyed; they were intended to arouse the wrath of the Arab people in order to cut off the Jewish leadership from all temptations to negotiate; they created that atmosphere of factual complicity which is always one of the main prerequisites for the rise to power of terrorist groups. And, indeed, no Jewish

leadership did come forward to stop the Irgun from taking political matters into its own hands and declaring war on all Arabs in the name of the Jewish community. The lukewarm protests of the Jewish Agency and the Haganah, forever limping behind, were followed two days later by an announcement from Tel Aviv that Irgun and Haganah were about to conclude an agreement. The Irgun attack on Jaffa, first denounced by Haganah, was followed by an agreement for joint action and the dispatch of Haganah units to Jaffa. This shows to what extent political initiative is already in terrorist hands.

The present Executive of the Jewish Agency and the Vaad Leumi have by now amply demonstrated that they are either unwilling or incapable of preventing the terrorists from making political decision for the whole Yishuv. It is even questionable whether the Jewish Agency is still in a position to negotiate for a temporary truce, since its enforcement would largely depend upon the consent of the extremist groups. It is quite possible that this was one of the reasons why representatives of the Agency, though they must know the desperate needs of their people, allowed the recent negotiations for a truce to break down. They may have been reluctant to reveal to the whole world their lack of effective power and authority.

The United Nations and the United States have up to now simply accepted the elected delegates of the Jewish and the Arab peoples, which was of course the proper thing to do. After the breakdown of truce negotiations, however, it would seem that there are now only two alternatives left for the great powers: either to leave the country (with the possible exception of the holy places) to a war that not only may mean another extermination of Jews but may also develop into a large-scale international conflict; or else to occupy the country with foreign troops and rule it without giving much consideration to either Jews or Arabs. The second alternative is clearly an imperialist one and would very likely end in failure if not carried out by a totalitarian government with all the paraphernalia of police terror.

However, a way out of this predicament may be found if the United Nations could summon up the courage in this unprecedented situation to take an unprecedented step by going to those Jewish and Arab individuals who at present are isolated because of their records as sincere believers in Arab-Jewish cooperation, and asking them to negotiate a truce. On the Jewish side, the so-called Ihud group among the Zionists, as well as certain outstanding non-Zionists, are clearly the people most eligible for this purpose at the moment.

Such a truce, or better, such a preliminary understanding—even negotiated between non-accredited parties—would show the Jews and the Arabs that it could be done. We know the proverbial fickleness of masses; there is a serious chance for a rapid and radical change of mood, which is the prerequisite for any real solution.

SUCH a move, however, could be effective only if concessions are made at once on both sides. The White Paper has been an enormous obstacle, in view of the terrible needs of Jewish DP's. Without the solution of their problem, no improvement in the mood of the Jewish people can be expected. Immediate admission of Jewish DP's to Palestine, though limited in terms of time and number, as well as immediate admission of Jewish and other DP's to the United States outside the quota system, are prerequisites for a sensible solution. On the other hand, the Palestinian Arabs should be guaranteed a well-defined share in the Jewish development of the country, which under any circumstances will still continue to be their common homeland. This would not be impossible if the huge amounts now expended in defense and rebuilding could be used instead for the realization of the Jordan Valley Authority project.

There can be no doubt that a trusteeship as proposed by President Truman and endorsed by Dr. Magnes is the best temporary solution. It would have the advantage of preventing the establishment of a sovereignty whose only sovereign right would be to com-

mit suicide. It would provide a cooling-off period. It could initiate the Jordan Valley Authority project as a government enterprise and it could establish for its realization local Arab-Jewish committees under the supervision and the auspices of an international authority. It could appoint members of the Jewish and the Arab intelligentsia to posts in local and municipal offices. Last but not least, trusteeship over the whole of Palestine would postpone and possibly prevent partition of the country.

It is true that many non-fanatical Jews of sincere good will have believed in partition as a possible means of solving the Arab-Jewish conflict. In the light of political, military, and geographic realities, however, this was always a piece of wishful thinking. The partition of so small a country could at best mean the petrification of the conflict, which would result in arrested development for both peoples; at worst it would signify a temporary stage during which both parties would prepare for further war. The alternative proposition of a federated state, also recently endorsed by Dr. Magnes, is much more realistic; despite the fact that it establishes a common government for two different peoples, it avoids the troublesome majority-minority constellation, which is insoluble by definition. A federated structure, moreover, would have to rest on Jewish-Arab community councils, which would mean that the Jewish-Arab conflict would be resolved on the lowest and most promising level of proximity and neighborliness. A federated state, finally, could be the natural stepping stone for any later, greater federated structure in the Near East and the Mediterranean area.

A federated state, however, such as is proposed by the Morrison Plan, is outside the actual political possibilities of the day. As matters now stand, it would be almost as unwise to proclaim a federated state over the heads and against the opposition of both peoples as it has already been to proclaim partition. This is, certainly, no time for final solutions; every single possible and practicable step is today a tentative effort whose chief aim is pacification and nothing more.

Trusteeship is not an ideal and not an eternal solution. But politics seldom offers ideal or eternal solutions. A United Nations trusteeship could be effectively carried through only if the United States and Great Britain were ready to back it up, no matter what happened. This does not necessarily mean great military commitments. There is still a good chance of recruiting police forces on the spot if the present memberships of the Arab Higher Committee and the Jewish Agency were to be denied authority in the country. Small local units composed of Jews and Arabs under the command of higher officers from countries that are members of the United Nations could become an important school for future cooperative self-government.

UNFORTUNATELY, in a hysterical atmosphere such proposals are only too liable to be dismissed as "stabs in the back" or unrealistic.

They are neither; they are, on the contrary, the only way of saving the reality of the Jewish homeland.

No matter what the outcome of the present deadlock, the following objective factors should be axiomatic criteria for the good and the bad, the right and the wrong:

1) The real goal of the Jews in Palestine is the building up of a Jewish homeland. This goal must never be sacrificed to the pseudo-sovereignty of a Jewish state.

2) The independence of Palestine can be achieved only on a solid basis of Jewish-Arab cooperation. As long as Jewish and Arab leaders both claim that there is "no bridge" between Jews and Arabs (as Moshe Shertok has just put it), the territory cannot be left to the political wisdom of its own inhabitants.

3) Elimination of all terrorist groups (and not agreements with them) and swift punishment of all terrorist deeds (and not merely protests against them) will be the only valid proof that the Jewish people in Palestine has recovered its sense of political reality and that Zionist leadership is again responsible enough to be trusted with the destinies of the Yishuv.

4) Immigration to Palestine, limited in numbers and in time, is the only "irreducible minimum" in Jewish politics.

5) Local self-government and mixed Jewish-Arab municipal and rural councils, on a small scale and as numerous as possible, are the only realistic political measures that can eventually lead to the political emancipation of Palestine.

It is still not too late.